

A Glimpse At The Way Of The Companions

Shaykh 'Abdul-Qaadir Al-Arna'oot

Translated by Abu Taher

Translator's Introduction

All praise is for Allah, we praise Him, seek His aid and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves and the evil of our actions. He whom Allah guides then there is none who can misguide him, and he whom Allah misguides then there is none who can guide him. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped (in truth) except Allah alone, having no partners and I bear witness that Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, is His slave and Messenger.

To proceed:

This is an abridgement of a small treatise written by the renowned scholar *Shaykh 'Abdul-Qadir al-Arna'oot hafidhahullah* who has specialised in the field of *Hadith*. His most famous works include the checking of *Zadul M'ad* by Ibn al-Qayyim, *Jami'-ul-Usul* by Ibn al-Athir and *al-Adhkar* by *Imam an-Nawawi*. This is the first treatise in a series regarding the Methodology of the Prophet, *upon whom be peace*, and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). It is the Methodology that was implemented by the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and adhered to by the best of generations (the Companions), giving them success in this world and the ultimate success in the Hereafter. This series is entitled *Tasfiyah wat Tarbiyah*,¹ which are the two main instruments of this Prophetic Methodology that can be used to help us remain firmly established upon the *Din* of Islam.

This treatise was written by *Shaykh 'Abdul-Qadir* in response to the numerous questions that were posed to him and the general confusion concerning this important matter. In compiling this treatise the *Shaykh* relied upon classical works, due to the importance of returning to the understanding of the early scholars of this *Ummah*.

This treatise has been translated in an attempt to remove the confusion surrounding this crucial subject, concerning the methodology adopted by the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and his Companions, *may Allah be pleased with them*, in establishing Islam as a way of life.

Every Muslim desiring to return to Islam in its true sense, must grasp what the Prophet, *upon whom be peace*, and his Companions were upon, in all aspects of life. Only then can we move further towards establishing Islam as our way of life. This treatise highlights the main principles governing the correct understanding of this topic, following the way of the early scholars in clarifying and expounding the Prophetic Methodology.

The treatise has been abridged in order to remove some of the unnecessary technical terms, and also wherever necessary, clarification of some terms and points have been included. A glossary has also been added to assist the reader.

¹ *Tasfiyah wat Tarbiyah*: Restoration of the Deen to its original pure form as it was revealed to the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) by removal and rejection of false beliefs, innovated practices and the fabricated and unauthentic Ahadeeth introduced into it (tasfiyah). Educating and cultivating the Muslims upon this pure Deen so that their beliefs, worship and manners become those that were taught by the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and held and practised by the Companions (tarbiyah). (Publisher's note)

We praise Allah and ask Him to make this treatise beneficial to the Muslims and to guide us to the Straight Path, the Path of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and his Companions. We ask Allah to make this purely for His Face for verily He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

Abu Taher

Definition of Manhaj

Linguistically and in the Sharee'ah: An-nahju, al-Manhaj and al-minhaaj mean the clear and manifest way. Allaah the Most High says in the glorious Qur'aan:

"To each among you we have prescribed a law and a minhaaj."

[Al-Maa'idah (5):48]

Meaning a law and a way which is clearly explained. Indeed Allaah, the Most High, prescribed for every nation a law and a clear way (a Manhaj). Thus the people of the Tauraat had a law and the people of the Injeel had a law and the people of the Qur'aan have a law.

These laws differ in their rules (ahkaam) but are united in the Tawheed of Allaah (uniqueness of Allaah) as Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"I am the most worthy person to 'Eesa ibn Maryam in this world and the Hereafter. The Prophets are paternal brothers, their mothers are different, and their Deen is one. There is no prophet between 'Eesa and myself."²

The meaning of this is that they (the prophets) are united upon the fundamentals of uniqueness (Tawheed) of Allaah; as for the branches of (furoo') of law and legislation, then differences occurred in them. Thus their laws are different.

Allaah the Most High says:

"And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We inspired to him that (say) "There is none who has the right to be worshipped except I (Allaah), so worship Me (alone and none else)."

[al-Anbiyaa' (21):25]

Also, the Saying of Allaah the Most High:

"And verily, We have sent among every nation (Ummah) a Messenger proclaiming: Worship Allaah alone and avoid the Taaghoot (all false deities)." [an-Nahl (16):36]

This is in respect of Tawheed (oneness) of Allaah, the One free from all defects. As for the laws, then they differed with respect to the commands and prohibitions.

Linguistic³ and legal definition of the word Salaf

² Reported by al-Bukhaaree in his Saheeh, the Book of Prophets, chapter 'Remember the Book of Maryam', Muslim in his Saheeh (no.2365), the Book of Merits, chapter 'Merits of 'Eesa peace be upon him'. From the hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah radiyallaahu anhu.

³ The linguistic definitions of the word Salaf are many; here the author has mentioned a few of them. (Translator)

1) As-Salaf - That which has past and preceded. Hence it is said Salafa shai Salafah to mean something which has passed; Salafa fulanan Salafan to mean someone has preceded; as-saalif - a predecessor; as-Salaf - a group of predecessors, and as-Salaf - a people who have preceded us in conduct.

Allaah says:

"So when they angered Us, We punished them, and drowned them all, and made them a precedent - Salafan (as a lesson for those coming after them) and an example to later generations." [az-Zukhruf (43):55-56]

That is **"when they angered Us, We punished them, drowning them all making them a precedent,"** predecessors for those who do action like theirs, so that the people coming after them can take heed and warn others by their example.

2) As-Salaf: Every good deed that one does. It is said: Qad Salaf lahu amal Saleh meaning, verily he has good deeds that have preceded him.

3) As-Salaf: Those who precede you, from amongst your forefathers and relatives, who may be older than you or better than you in merit.⁴ The singular of this term is Saalif.

Due to this, the first generation (the Companions) were called as-Salaf-us-Saleh (the Pious Predecessors).

The Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) and his Companions and those that follow them in Ihsaan⁵ are the Salaf of this Ummah.⁶

Matters concerning their Methodology

(i) Status of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam)

Everyone who calls to what the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam), his Companions and their successors called to, then he is upon the way of the Salaf-us-Saleh. It is obligatory upon all Muslims to follow the Noble Book (Qur'aan) and the pure Sunnah, by going back to the understanding the Pious Predecessors (Salaf-us-Saleh), may Allaah be pleased with them all. For verily they are the ones that deserve the most to be followed, as they were truthful in their faith, strong in their beliefs and sincere in their worship.

The leader (Imaam) of the Salaf-us-Saleh is Allaah's Messenger, Muhammad (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam), whom Allaah has ordered us, in His Book (the

⁴ This definition can be found in Lisan ul-Arab, by Ibn Mandhoor al-Afreeqee. (Translator)

⁵ Ihsaan, in this usage has been explained to mean following in terms of beliefs, sayings and actions. Refer to Tayseer al-Kareem ar-Rahmaan fee Tafseer Kalaamul-Mannaan, the book of Tafseer by Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin Naasir as-Sa'dee. (Translator)

⁶ The technical (Islamic) meaning of the word Salaf, as understood by the majority of the scholars of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah, has been defined as being the Companions, the Successors (taabi'oon) and the Successors to the Successors (atbaa at-taabi'oon) that is the first three generations. This has been taken from the saying of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam): "The best of people are my generation then those who come after them, then those who come after them, then there will come a people in whom there will be no good." Reported by at-Tabaraanee from Ibn Mas'ood and declared authentic by al-Albaanee in Saheeh al-Jaami', and there are many other similar Ahadeeth to the above, all of which have lead to the definition of the word Salaf being restricted to the first three generations.

Qur'aan), to follow, in His saying:

"And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you take it, and whatsoever he forbids you abstain from it." [al-Hashr (59):7]

The Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is a beautiful example, and a righteous model to be followed, Allaah the Most High says:

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allaah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow, for him who hopes in meeting Allaah and the Last Day and remembers Allaah much." [al-Ahzaab (33):21]

The Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the one who speaks by revelation sent to him from the heavens:

"Nor does he speak of his own desire. It is only an inspiration that is inspired." [an-Najm (53):3-4]

Allaah, the Most High, ordered that we judge by the Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) in all affairs in our life. Allaah, the One free of all defects, says:

"But no by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decision and accept them with full submission."
[an-Nisaa' (4):65]

Allaah, the Most High, warned us about opposing the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"So let those who oppose the Messenger's commandments (i.e. his Sunnah) beware lest some fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant, etc.) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them." [an-Noor (24):63]

The reference point of the Salaf, whenever they have a disagreement, is the Book of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, and the Sunnah of the Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). Allaah, the Most High, says:

"And if you differ in anything amongst yourselves refer it to Allaah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination." [an-Nisaa' (4):59]

The Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the conveyer (of news) from his Lord and the one who explains His Book. Allaah the Most High says:

"And We have sent down to you (Muhammad) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'aan) that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them." [an-Nahl (16):44]

The Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said in a hadeeth:

"Adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa', bite on to it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters, for verily every innovation (Bid'ah) is a going astray."⁷

⁷ Reported by Ahmad bin Hanbal in Musnad (4/126, 127) Aboo Daawood in his Sunan

(ii) Status of the Companions

The best of the Salaf after the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) are the Companions, who took their Religion (Deen) from the Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) with truthfulness and sincerity; just as Allaah has described them in His Book when He said:

"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allaah and showed not their backs to the disbelievers, of them some have fulfilled their obligations and some of them are still waiting, but they never changed (i.e. they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allaah) in the least." [al-Ahzaab (33):23]

They are the ones who did righteous deeds, which Allaah, the Most High, has mentioned in His Book, in His saying:

"But righteousness is the quality of one who believes in Allaah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the relative, to the orphans and to the poor who beg and to the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free, and offers the prayer perfectly (iqamat-as-Salat), and gives the zakaat (obligatory charity) and who fulfil their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during battles); such are the people of the truth and they are the pious."
[al-Baqarah (2):177]

This verse is the verse which professes the truth with which the Companions have been described with.

Sources Of The Deen

The Book of Allaah, the Most High, is their manual (dustoor) and their law then the Sunnah after ⁸ the Book of Allaah. The Sunnah is the most blessed of sources and the best of sciences, the most beneficial of all, in the Deen and Dunya (world), after the Book of Allaah, the One free of all defects. It is like the meadows and gardens, you will find in it all goodness and righteousness. After

(4607) in the Book of Sunnah, chapter 'Adhering to the Sunnah', at-Tirmidhee in his Sunan (no.2678) in the Book of Knowledge, Chapter '16', Ibn Majah, in his Sunan (no.42) in the Muqaddimah (introduction) and others. From the hadeeth of 'Irbaad bin Saariyah radiyallaahu 'anhu, and it is an authentic hadeeth. Refer to the detailed explanation of the hadeeth in Jaami' al-Uloom wal-Hikaam by Haafidh ibn Rajab al-Hanbalee rahimahullaah, for verily he has done extremely well in explaining it and benefited others in doing so.

⁸ The majority of the scholars of Ahl-Sunnah say the Qur'aan and the Sunnah go hand in hand, not one before the other. One does not refer to the Sunnah only when nothing is found in the Qur'aan. Rather whenever one needs to look for a verdict one goes back to the Qur'aan and Sunnah, together. Shaykh al-Albaanee, in Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth ad-Da'eefah (vol 2 no.881), says: " ... rather it is obligatory to refer to the Book and Sunnah, together, without differentiating between them, since the Sunnah explains the general (mujmal) verses of the Qur'aan, restricts its unrestricted verses, specifies its general verses, as is known ... "

There are many sayings from the Salaf showing that this view was held by them. Imaam al-Awzaa'ee and Imaam Yahya bin Katheer and others have said: "The Qur'aan is in more need of the Sunnah than the Sunnah is of the Book. The Sunnah is Qadiyatun (conclusive) over the Book and the Book is not conclusive over the Sunnah." Reported by ad-Daarimee (1/117). Similar narrations from the Salaf concerning this topic can be found in the books of the Salaf like al-Ibaanah of Ibn Battah. (Translator)

the Sunnah, their manual is that which the Salaf of this Ummah and it's A'immah have agreed upon.

The Salaf-us-Saleh are also: The Best Generation, about which the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said in a hadeeth:

"The best of the people are my generation, then those after them, then those after them ... " and he (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "Then there will come a people giving witness when they are not asked to give witness. They will be dishonest and not be trusted. They will take vows but will not fulfil them. Fatness will appear amongst them." ⁹

From their beliefs

Thus the fundamentals of the Religion (Usool ud-Deen) which were adhered to by those that preceded from the leaders (a'immah) of the Deen, the scholars of the Muslims and the Salaf-us-Saleh and what they called people to are:

That they believe in the Book and Sunnah; ¹⁰ the general and the detailed aspects of it. They attest to the oneness of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, and attest to the Messengership of Muhammad (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

They know their Lord by the attributes (sifaat) that His revelation has spoken of, or are attested to by the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) from that which is found in authentic Ahadeeth, narrated from him by just and reliable narrators.

They affirm for Allaah, the Most High, that which He affirmed for Himself in His Book, or upon the tongue of His Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) without making Tashbeeh ¹¹ (resembling) to His creation, without Tahreef

⁹ Reported by al-Bukhari (5/190) in the book of Witness, chapter 'Do not be a witness to injustice is asked that,' and in the book of Merits of the Companions of the Prophet, chapter 'Merits of the Companions of the Prophet', and in the book of Softening the Hearts, chapter 'Warning regarding worldly pleasures, amusements and competing with each other for the enjoyment thereof' Muslim (no.2535) in the book of Merits of the Companions, chapter 'Merits of the Companions then those after them then those after them' at-Tirmidhi (no.2222) in the book of Trials, chapter 'That which has come regarding the first three generations' and (no.2303) in the book of Witness, chapter 'Best generations.' Abu Dawud (no.4657) in the book of *Sunnah*, chapter 'Merits of the Companions of the Messenger.' An-Nasa'i (7/17,18) in the book of Covenants and Vows, chapter 'Fulfilling Vows' all from the *hadith* of 'Imran bin Hussain. Also reported by al-Bukhari (5/191) in the book of Witness, chapter 'Do not be a witness to injustice if asked to do that', the book of Merits of the Companions of the Prophet, chapter 'Merits of the Companions of the Prophet,' and in the book of softening the heart, chapter 'Covenants and Vows'. Muslim (no.2533) in the book of Merits of the Companions of the Prophet. At-Tirmidhi (no.3858) in the book of virtues. All from the *hadith* of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, *may Allah be pleased with him*.

¹⁰ This includes all authentic hadeeth, whether it be a narration with numerous chains (mutawaatir) or a hadeeth with just one, two or three chains (ahaad). The beliefs are based upon both, refer to the book by Abul Qasim al-Asbahaanee al-Hujjah fee Bayaan al-Mahajjah wa Sharh 'Aqeedatul Ahl-Sunnah, ar-Risalaah by Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee and Mukhtasar Sawaa'iqul Mursalah by Ibn al-Qayyim. (Translator)

¹¹ **Tashbeeh: Tamtheel** (resembling, comparing) the Sifaat (attributes) of Allaah to the sifaat (attributes) of creation; "so it is not said that the Essence of Allaah is like our essence neither does it resemble our essence and likewise the Sifaat of Allaah - we do not say that His attributes are like our attributes, not resemble our attributes. Rather it is waajib (obligatory) for a believer to stick to the saying of Allaah: **"There is nothing like unto Him .. "** (ash-Shoora 42:11).

(changing), without Tabdeel and without Tamtheel.¹²

Allaah, the Most High, says:

"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the all Hearer, all Seer."
[ash-Shoora (42):11]

Imaam az-Zuhree ¹³ said: "Upon Allaah is the bayaan (explaining), upon the Messenger is the balaagh (conveying) and upon us is tasleem (willingly accepting)." [This is reported by al-Bukhaaree in mu'allaq form (13/503), by Ibn Abee Aasim in Kitaab al-Adaab and in Kitaab az-Zuhd (71) and by Aboo Nu'aym in Hilyah (3/179)]

Imaam Sufyaan ibn 'Uyaynah ¹⁴ said: "All that Allaah has described Himself with in His Book, then its tafseer (explanation) is its reciting and keeping silent about it."

Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee ¹⁵ said: "I believe in Allaah, and that which has come from Allaah, upon the intended meaning of Allaah. I believe in the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and that which has come from the Messenger of Allaah upon the intended meaning of the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam)."

The Salaf and leaders of the khalaf (those later generations after the Salaf) many Allaah be pleased with them, proceeded along this way. They are all agreed upon, affirming, asserting and confirming that which is found in the Book of Allaah, the Most High, and the Sunnah of His Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), regarding Allaah's attributes without subjecting them to interpretation

Tahreef: Changing the 'terms' of the names and attributes of Allaah or changing their 'meanings'; like the saying of the Jahmiyyah (a deviant sect) that istawaa (being high above the throne) means istawlaa (seizing power over something). Thus Ahlus-Sunnah do not do this.

Tabdeel: see tahreef.

Tamtheel: see tashbeeh.

Refer to Tambihaat al-Laatifah 'alaa 'Aqeedatul-Waasitiyyah by Shaykh Sa'dee rahimahullaah. (Translator)

¹² Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymiyyah says in 'Aqeedatul-Wasitiyyah when talking about Eemaan (belief) in Allaah's Sifaat (attributes): "Eemaan (belief) in all what Allaah has described Himself by, in His Book and in what His Messenger Muhammad (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has described Him by - without doing tahreef, ta'teel, takyeef or tamtheel."

This statement shows two other principles held by Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah regarding eemaan in Allaah and His Sifaat (attributes); that is they do not do ta'teel, which is to deny or reject the Sifaat of Allaah; and takyeef - which is to ask how and question their manner. Refer to 'Aqeedatul-Waasitiyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah, and Qatful-Thamr fee-Bayaan 'Aqeedatul-Ahlul-Athar by Siddeeq Hasan Khan, Mukhtasar Sawaa'iqul-Mursalah by Ibn al-Qayyim and Fataawa al-Hamawiyyah al-Kubrah by Ibn Taymiyyah. (Translator)

¹³ Muhammad bin Muslim ibn 'Ubaid Allaah bin 'Abdullah bin Shihaab bin Zahrah, Aboo Bakr. A faqeeh (jurist) and haafidh. His high status of proficiency is agreed upon. He is a successor, from Madeenah and one of the great Imaams, a scholar of Hijaaz and Shaam. He died in 125H.

¹⁴ Sufyaan bin 'Uyaynah, Haafidh Aboo Muhammad al-Hilaalee al-Koofee. He was an Imaam, a haafidh, a proof (hujja), having immense knowledge, and of great ability. A muhaddith (scholar of hadeeth) of the Haram of Makkah. Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee said about him: "Were it not for Maalik and Sufyaan the knowledge would have disappeared from the Hijaaz." He died whilst in Makkah in the year 198 hijree.

¹⁵ Muhammad bin Idrees bin al-'Abbaas bin Uthmaan bin Shoafa ash-Shaafi'ee al-Muttalibi; Aboo 'Abdullaah. He was a mujaddid (reviver) of the Deen at the beginning of 200 Hijree, a well known Imaam. He died in Egypt in the year 204 Hijree.

(ta'weel).

Verily we have been ordered to follow their way and to be guided by their light. The Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has warned us of newly invented matters, and informed us that they are from misguidance. He said in a hadeeth:

"Adhere to my Sunnah (way) and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafaa'. Bite on to it with your molar teeth, and beware of newly invented matters, for verily every Bid'ah (innovation) is a going astray." [Its reference (takhreej) has preceded. (see footnote no. 7)]

'Abdullah bin Mas'ood ¹⁶ radiyallaahu 'anhumaa said: "Follow and do not innovate for verily you have been sufficed."

'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Azeez ¹⁷ said: "Do not go beyond where they stopped. For verily they stopped upon knowledge and with a perceiving view sufficed."

Imaam al-Awzaa'ee ¹⁸ said: "Stick to the footsteps of the Salaf, even if people abandon you. Beware of the views of men, even if they beautify it for you with words."

From the 'Aqeedah ¹⁹ (beliefs) of the Salaf-us-Saleh is their saying: Eemaan is a saying of the tongue, an action by the limbs and a strong belief in the heart. Eemaan increases with obedience to Allaah and decreases with disobedience to Allaah.

From the beliefs of the Salaf is that good and evil is by the Qadaa (decree) of Allaah, the Most High, and His Qadr (pre-estimation). However evil is not ordered by Allaah, as some of them say: "All of it is ordered by Allaah," since Allaah has ordered good and prohibited evil. He did not order us with abominable acts, indeed He prohibited us from them. The human is not forced, he chooses his acts and beliefs. He deserves punishment or reward, depending upon his choice and he is the chooser in (doing or leaving) the ordered and prohibited things. Allaah, the Most High, says:

"Then whosoever wills let him believe, and whosoever wills let him disbelieve." [al-Kahf (18):29]

¹⁶ 'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood ibn Ghaafil ibn Habeeb al-Huthalee, Aboo 'Abdur-Rahmaan. From the first generation of Muslims and from the major Companions in merit and intellect. He migrated to Habasha (Ethiopia) and then to Madeenah. He witnessed the battle of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, the pledge of Ridwaan and the remaining incidents with the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam); he was from the fuqahaa (jurists) of the Companions - may Allaah be pleased with them - he died in Madeenah in 32 hijree.

¹⁷ Aboo Hafs, 'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Marwaan bin Hakam al-Amawee al-Qurashee. A righteous Khaleefah. Born and raised in Madeenatul-Munawwarah. He took the position of Khaleefah in the year 99 Hijree and died in the land of Shaam, in the year 101 Hijree.

¹⁸ 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Amr bin Yuhmid al-Awzaa'ee. A famous Imaam of Syria. He used to live in Damascus, outside Bab al-Fraadees and then moved to Beirut and lived there, posted in the way of Allaah, until he died in the year 157 Hijree.

¹⁹ The word 'Aqeedah signifies the thing that one believes in (has eemaan in), hence the two words ('Aqeedah and eemaan) are sometimes synonymous. The word 'Aqeedah being taken from the Arabic root of 'aqada - to tie - to fasten. Thus 'Aqeedah is those things that the heart is tied to or fastened to, worshipping Allaah by it and, getting closer to Allaah. Refer to classical Arabic dictionaries like Lisan ul-Arab by Ibn Mandhoor al-Afreeqee. (Translator)

From the beliefs of the Salaf is that they do not make takfeer ²⁰ of anyone of the Muslim due to a sin, even if it is from the major sins. Except if he denies (rejects) a thing that is known in the religion by necessity and is known by the scholars as well as the generality of people, and is based firmly upon the Book and the Sunnah and Consensus (Ijmaa') of the Salaf of this Ummah and its leader.

From the beliefs of the Salaf-us-Saleh is that they worship Allaah, the Most High, and do not associate anything with Him. Thus they do not ask any one except Allaah, the Most High, of a need no one else can satisfy. They do not seek help (in which no one can help) from anyone except Allaah, the One free of all defects. They do not call upon anyone for aid (for an immediate need that no one can fulfil) except upon Allaah. They do not make tawassul (seeking nearness) to Allaah except by obeying Him, worshipping Him and doing good / righteous deeds. This being taken from His saying:

“O you who believe! Do your duty to Allaah and fear Him, seek the means of approach to Him.” [al-Maa'idah (5):35]

That is, draw close to Allaah by obedience to Him and by worship of Him.

From the beliefs of the Salaf-us-Saleh is that Prayer (Salaat) behind all righteous people and sinners is permissible if the external nature of the prayer is correct.²¹

We do not certify with certainty for anyone, whoever he may be, of being in Paradise or in Hell; except whoever the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) testified for. However we hope Paradise for the righteous and fear Hell for the sinful.

We testify for the ten people given the glad tidings of Jannah (Paradise), that they will be in Jannah (Paradise); just as the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) testified this for them. We testify, as being in Jannah, for everyone that the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) testifies this for them. This is because the Prophet does not speak of his own desire. Indeed it is nothing but revelation revealed to him. We take the Companions of Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) as awliyaa (friends). We refrain from showing their defects ²² and that which happened between them. Their affair is with their Lord. We do not abuse anyone of the Companions. This is taken from the Prophet's (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) saying:

²⁰ Takfeer is the action of declaring a Muslim to have left Islam. This is left for the people of knowledge ('ulamaa) to do and it must be done following strict guidelines. Refer to the book al-'Uzar bil-Jahal wa rad'ala bid'atut Takfeer (The Excuse of Ignorance and the Refutation of the Innovation of Takfeer) by Ahmad Fareed. (Translator)

²¹ What is implied by the statement if the external nature of the prayer is correct is that all the pillars and obligatory actions of the prayer are enacted by the one leading the prayer. For example that he faces the Qiblah etc. (Translator)

²² The proof for this is abundant, found in the books of 'Aqeedah and hadeeth, like the saying of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam), "When my companions are mentioned then refrain." Reported in Hilyatul-Awliyaa (41108), at-Tabaraanee in al-Kabeer (2/78/2) from the hadeeth of Ibn Mas'ood radiyallaahu 'anhu. Also in Kitaab Sharh-us-Sunnah by Imaam al-Barbahaaree, point 104, " ... and if you see a man criticising the Companions of the Prophet Do not discuss about their slips or their wars, nor of that which the knowledge of which escapes you, and do not hear from anyone who speaks it, since your heart will not remain safe and sound if you hear it." Thus Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah do not talk about such things, knowing that Allaah has forgiven them (the Companions) their errors. (Translator)

"Let none of you abuse (slander) my Companions. For by Him in whose Hand is my life, if one of you spent (in the way of Allaah) the equivalent of mount Uhud in gold it would not reach a handful nor half a handful of what they spent." ²³

The Companions are not infallible from error. Infallibility is for Allaah, the Most High, and for His Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) in conveying the message. Allaah, the Most High, has protected the collective Ummah from mistakes (and not individuals) as the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Indeed Allaah will never unite this Ummah upon misguidance and the Hand of Allaah is upon the Jamaa'ah." ²⁴

We are pleased with the wives of the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), they are the mothers of the believers and we believe that they are pure and innocent from all evil.

From the beliefs of the Pious Predecessors is that they do not make it obligatory upon any Muslim to restrict himself to a specific madhhab.²⁵ He can move from one madhhab to another, due to the strength of the evidence (in a particular point). The layman has no madhhab. Rather his madhhab is the madhhab of his mufti (scholar who gives religious verdicts). ²⁶ If a student of knowledge (taalibul-'ilm) has the ability to recognise the proofs and evidences of the Imams, he should act by it, moving from a madhhab of an Imaam, in any issue, to the madhhab of another Imaam, due to the strength of the evidence, and the more correct understanding, in an issue. Thus he becomes a muttabi' (a follower) and not a mujtahid. [A mujtahid is one who is qualified to extract rulings from the Qur'aan and Sunnah]

From the beliefs of the Salaf-us-Saleh is that the four Companions: Aboo Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and 'Alee radiyallaahu 'anhum are the rightly guided Khulafaa'

²³ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (7/27,28) in the book of Merits of the Prophet's Companions, chapter 'If I was to take a Khaleel', Muslim (2541) in the book of Virtues of the Companions, chapter 'Prohibition of abusing the Companions.' Aboo Daawood (4658) in the book of Sunnah chapter 'Prohibition of abusing the Companions', at-Tirmidhee (3860) in the book of Virtues. All from the hadeeth of Aboo Sa'eed al-Khudree radiyallaahu 'anhu. Also reported by Muslim (2540) in the book of Virtues of the Companions in the chapter 'Prohibition of abusing the Companions' from the hadeeth of Aboo Hurairah radiyallaahu 'anhu.

²⁴ Reported by at-Tirmidhee from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (No. 2168) in the book of Fitan, chapter 'That which has come in adhering to the Jamaa'ah'. Its chain has a weakness, however it has a shaahid (supporting narration) with at-Tirmidhee from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas (no. 2167) and another supporting narration with Ibn Abee 'Aasim in as-Sunnah (no. 81) from the hadeeth of Usaamah bin Shaarik. Thus the hadeeth is an authentic hadeeth.

²⁵ Madhhab is a school of thought or a position held by a scholar.

²⁶ Refer to the book Risaalatul-Taqlaad by Ibn al-Qayyim for it is very important. The layman follows the scholars, as Allaah has ordered him to do in the verse: **"Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know."** [an-Nahl (16):43] The layman by following the scholars is indeed following the Qur'aan and Sunnah and not doing taqlaad (blind following) rather this is called ittibaa' for him. However he does not follow the scholars in their mistakes, when it is made clear to him that it is a mistake. This is what is required of the layman, as Ibn al-Qayyim points out in his book. The one who has the ability to weigh up evidences, ie. a student of knowledge, he can look into the proofs and follow the strongest proof, but the one who does not have the ability, ie. a layman, then he follows the scholars, as Allaah has ordered him to do. (Translator)

Refer also to Blind Following of Madhhab's, by Shaykh Muhammad Sulmaan al-Ma'soomee (Al-Hidaayah, 1993). [Publisher's note]

and with them existed the Khilaafatun-Nabuwwah (Khilaafah upon the Prophetic Way) lasting for thirty years including the Khilaafah (ruling period) of Hasan radiyallaahu 'anhū. This is taken from the saying of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam):

"The Khilaafah in my Ummah is for thirty years then after it is kingship." ²⁷

From the beliefs of the Salaf-us-Saleh is that it is obligatory to have Eemaan (faith) in all that the Qur'aan has come with, and what Allaah, the Most High, has ordered us with, and leaving all that Allaah, the Most High, has prohibited us from, the general and the detailed. We believe in all that the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has informed us of, when its transmission from him is authentic, in that which we witness or do not witness, regardless of whether we comprehend it, or are ignorant of it or we have not come across the reality of its meaning.

We carry out the orders of Allaah, the Most High, and the orders of his Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). We refrain from what Allaah, the Most High, has prohibited us from and what the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) prohibited us from. We stop at the hudood (boundaries) of the Book of Allaah, and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez said:

"The Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and the leaders of the Muslims after him set examples (Sunnah), the taking of which is holding on to the Book of Allaah, the Most High, and strength upon the Deen of Allaah. It is not for any one to change or alter it, nor to look at a matter in opposition to it. Whoever is guided by it then he is truly guided, and whoever seeks help by it then he is truly helped. Whoever leaves it and follows a way other than the way of the believers, Allaah will turn him to what he has chosen and burn him in hell what an evil abode!"

This is confirmed by the saying of Allaah's Messenger (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam):

"... and beware of newly invented matters,
for verily every bid'ah is a going astray."

This hadeeth is a great principle from the principles of the Deen and it resembles another saying of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam):

"Whoever invents into this Deen of ours that which is not from it,
then it is rejected." ²⁸

In it is a warning from following newly invented matters in the Deen and worship. The meaning of Bid'ah is that which has been invented and has no root in the Sharee'ah pointing to it. As for what has a root in the Sharee'ah pointing to it

²⁷ Reported by Ahmad in Musnad (5/220, 221), at-Tirmidhee (no.2227) in the book of Fitan, chapter 'That which has come regarding the Khilaafah', Abou Daawood (no. 4646 and 4647) in the book of as-Sunnah, chapter 'Khulafaa'. Ibn Hibbaan (no. 1534 1535 - in Mawarid) in the book of 'Imaarah, chapter of 'Khilaafah', al-Haakim in al-Mustadrak (3/71, 145) from the hadeeth of Safeenah. It is an authentic hadeeth and the thirty year period was the period of the rightly guided Khulafaa up to when Hasan abdicated from his Khilaafah.

²⁸ Reported by al-Bukhaaree in ta'leeq form (without mentioning the chain) (4/298) and in the full form (5/221), Muslim (no.1718), Abou Daawood in the book of Sunnah (no.4606), Ibn Majah (no.14).

then it is not legally (technically) a Bid'ah; even though linguistically the term Bid'ah may be applied to it. Thus whenever something new is introduced into the Deen, having no root (in the Deen) to return it to, then it is misguidance - deviation. The Deen is free of it, regardless of whether it is connected to issues of belief, actions or sayings.

As for the istihsaan (approval and condoning) of Bid'ah, which occurred in the words of the Salaf, then that is in relation to Bid'ah al-logawee (linguistic use of Bid'ah) and not in the legal (technical) use of the term Bid'ah. From these sayings is the saying of 'Umar bin al-Khattab, when he gathered the people in Qiyaam-ur-Ramadaan - Taraaweeh prayers - behind one Imaam in the Masjid. He went out and saw them praying and said: "What a wonderful Bid'ah."

This has a root in the Sharee'ah. Verily the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) prayed it (this prayer) in congregation in the Masjid and then left it, fearing that it might become obligatory upon his Ummah and that they would be unable to perform it. Indeed they became free of this fear after the death of the Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam). So 'Umar radiyallaahu 'anhu revived it. As for that which is a matter confirmed, in worship, then it is not permissible to make additions to it. So, for example the adhaan, remains the form in which it was legislated, without addition or subtraction. The Prayer remains upon the manner it was legislated as the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Pray as you have seen me praying." ²⁹

Hajj remains upon the manner in which it was legislated, because the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Take from me your rites (of Hajj)." ³⁰

Indeed the Muslims have done things that were not present in the time of the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam), due to them being daroorah (necessities) in preserving Islam. Indeed they have permitted it and kept quiet about it. Like the gathering of the people to one mushaf (that which the Qur'aan is written upon), by 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affan radiyallaahu 'anhu, fearing the splitting of the Ummah. Indeed it was approved of by the Companions radiyallaahu 'anhum and that was for a maslaha (benefit).

The example of writing down Prophetic traditions (hadeeth) fearing its loss due to the death of its people. The writing of Tafseer of the Qur'aan and the Hadeeth. The compilation of 'Ilm-an-Nahw (science of grammar) to safeguard the Arabic language, which is a means of understanding Islam. The formation of 'Ilm-al-Mustalah (science of hadeeth). Thus, these are permissible to safeguard the Islamic Sharee'ah. Verily Allaah, the Most High, has taken the responsibility of safeguarding His Law - from His saying:

"Indeed it is We who have sent down the Dhikr (Qur'aan) and surely We will guard it (from corruption)." [al-Hijr (15):9]

The Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"This ilm (Deen) will be carried by the trustworthy ones of each generation. Negating from it the tahreef (alterations) of the ones

²⁹ This is an authentic hadeeth, reported by al-Bukhaaree in his Saheeh.

³⁰ Reported by Muslim (no.1297) in the Book of Hajj

going beyond bounds, the false assumptions of the liars,
and the ta'weel (false interpretations) of the ignorant."

This hadeeth is hasan due to all its chains and shawaahids (supporting narrations).

This is the belief ('Aqeedah) - of the first group of this Ummah (i.e. the Companions) radiyallaahu 'anhum and it is a pure belief like the purity of fresh drinking water, strong as the firmly fixed mountains, firm as the firmest of hand holds. It is a flawless 'Aqeedah, a straight way, upon the methodology of the Book and the Sunnah and the sayings of the Salaf of this Ummah and its A'immah (leaders). It is the way which revived the hearts of the pioneers of this Ummah.

The Belief of the Pious Scholars of Islam

It is 'Aqeedah of the Salaf-us-Saleh, Firqatun-Naajiyah (saved sect) Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. It is the 'Aqeedah of the four Imaams³¹ - the founders of the well known and followed madhhab's and of most of their followers. It is the 'Aqeedah of the generality of the fuqahaa, the muhadditheen, the scholars that act on what they know, and those that traverse along their way, to this day and until the Day of the Judgement.

Indeed the ones that differed are the ones that altered their (the Imaams) sayings, from amongst those of the later generations (muta'akhireen) who ascribe to their madhhab's.

So our duty is to return, with a pure 'Aqeedah, to the fountain which the best of our Pious Predecessors drank from. To keep quiet about that which they kept quiet about, to perform our 'Ibaadah (worship) the way they performed their worship, to adhere to the Book and Sunnah, the ijmaa of the Salaf of this Ummah and its A'immah, and the correct qiyaas in new matters.

Imaam an-Nawawee rahimahullaah, said in al-Adhkaar. [In p137 of my (Shaykh Abdul Qaadir's) checking of al-Adhkaar in the book of Janaaza, chapter 'What one who is walking with the Janaaza says.']

"... and know that the selected, correct way is that which the Salaf-us-Saleh were upon, and that is the truth. Do not be fooled by the large number that oppose it. For indeed Aboo 'Alee Fudayl bin 'Iyaad said (the meaning of which is): "Stick to the ways of guidance and you will not be harmed by the smallness of numbers that follow it. Beware of the ways of misguidance and do not be fooled by the

³¹ **Nu'maan bin Thaabit (Aboo Haneefah)** - One of the Imaams of the Islam and leading personalities. Born 80 Hijree during the era of the young Companions, he saw Anas bin Maalik radiyallaahu 'anhu (at a young age). His main students are Aboo Yoosuf and Muhammad al-Hasan ash-Shaybaanee. The Hanafee madhhab is ascribed to him but more than a third of the madhhab is from other later scholars. He died 150 hijree.

Maalik bin Anas, Imaam of Daar-ul-Hijrah (Madeenah). Born 93 Hijree, the year Anas bin Maalik died. An Imaam of the Muslims and a leading scholar of Islam. The Maalikee madhhab is ascribed to him.

Muhammad bin Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee - see footnote (14).

Ahmad bin Hanbal, known as the Imaam of Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. Born in Baghdad 164 hijree. He was from the few who at his time preserved the way of the Companions, fighting away the innovations of the deviant sects and upholding the way of the Salaf. From amongst his students were Aboo Daawood, 'Alee bin al-Madane, Aboo Zu'arah and Aboo Haatim and many more famous scholars of Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. He died 241 hijree. May Allaah have mercy upon them, they are known as the four well followed Imams. (Translator)

multitude of the ones that will be destroyed."

This is the only way that will reform the rest of the Ummah. Imam Maalik bin Anas rahimahullaah, the scholar of Madeenah spoke the truth when he said:

"The latter part of the Ummah will never be reformed except by that which reformed the former part."

Never will good disappear from this Ummah, because the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said in a hadeeth:

"There will not cease to be a group from my Ummah manifestly upon the Haqq (Truth). The ones that abandon them will not harm them, until the Order of Allaah comes and they are like that (upon the Truth)." ³²

The Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) further said:

"The example of my Ummah is like of rain. It is not known whether the initial part (of the rain) is good or the latter part." ³³ This is an authentic hadeeth.

Indeed the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf-us-Saleh has been stipulated by a great many of the scholars. ³⁴ From them, Aboo Ja'far at-Tahaawee, ³⁵ and his 'Aqeedah has been explained by Ibn Abil-'Izz al-Hanafee ³⁶ one of the students of Ibn Katheer al-Dimishqee naming Sharh al-'Aqeedah at-Tahaawiiyyah and, from them is Abul-Hasan al-Ash'aree, ³⁷ in his book al-Ibaanah 'an Usool ad-Diyaanah. This being

³² Reported by Muslim in his Saheeh (no.1920) in the book of 'Imaarah, chapter 'The saying of the Prophet: There will not cease to be a group ... ' Aboo Daawood (no.4252) in the book of Fitnah, chapter 'Mention of the fitnah and its signs', at-Tirmidhee (no.2177) and (2230) in the book of Fitnah. All from the hadeeth of Thawbaan radiyallaahu 'anhu. The hadeeth has various narrations from the hadeeth of Mugheerah bin Shu'bah, Sa'd bin Abee Waqqaas, Mu'aawiyah bin Abee Sufyaan, 'Imraan bin Hussain and others radiyallaahu 'anhum.

³³ Reported by Ahmad in Musnad (3/130), at-Tirmidhee (no.2873). Also reported in Ahmad (4/319).

³⁴ Here it is fitting to mention some of the early books, in which the early scholars have stipulated this pure 'Aqeedah:

Kitaabul-Eemaan by Abee 'Ubaydah Qaasim bin Sallaam (d.224).

Rad 'alaa Zanaadiqa wal-Jahmiyyah by Imaam Ahmad.

Rad 'alaa Jahmiyyah by Imaam al-Bukhaaree.

Khalq Af'aal al-'Ibaad by Imaam al-Bukhaaree.

Al-Eemaan by Ibn Mandah (d.390).

As-Sunnah and Usool as-Sunnah by Imaam Ahmad.

As-Sunnah by Aboo Bakr bin Athraam (d.272).

Kitaab us-Sunnah by 'Abdullaah Ibn Ahmad (d.290).

As-Sunnah by Nasr al-Marwazee (d.294).

As-Sunnah by al-Khallaal (a student of Imaam Ahmad) (d.311).

Kitaab Sharh us-Sunnah by Imaam al-Barbahaaree (d.329).

Kitaab ut-Tawheed by Imaam of the A'immah Ibn Khuzaimah (d.311).

Al-Ibaanah al-Kubra and al-Ibaanah as-Sughra by Ibn Battah (d.387).

Sharh Usool al-'Ittiqaad Ahl-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah by Imaam al-Laalakaa'ee (d.418), which is in 9 parts, but printed in 5 volumes, containing the beliefs of the Salaf and many small treatises traced back by isnaad to the Salaf, it is a masterpiece and an essential reference book for all students of knowledge. [Translator]

³⁵ Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Salaamah al-Azdee at-Tahaawee. Died in the year 320 hijree in Egypt and is buried in Qarafa.

³⁶ Abul-Hasan Sadruddeen 'Alee bin 'Alaa-uddeen Ibn Abil-'Izz al-Hanafee. He died in the year 792 hijree.

³⁷ 'Alee bin Ismaa'eel bin Ishaaq from the descendants of Aboo Moosa al-Ash'aree radiyallaahu 'anhu. Died in the year 323 hijree.

the 'Aqeedah which he finally settled upon. He said: " ... our saying, which we state, the Deen which we profess belief in, is adherence to the Book of Allaah, the Sunnah of our Prophet (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and that which is related from the Companions."

From those that wrote about the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf-us-Saleh is as-Saaboonee³⁸ in his book Aqeedat-us-Salaf and Muwaffiq-ud-Deen ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdasee al-Hanbalee³⁹ in his book Luma'tul 'Itiqaad al-Haadi ilaa Sabeel ar-Rashaad, and other glorious scholars, may Allaah reward them with good.

We ask Allaah to guide us to the pure 'Aqeedah (beliefs) and to a pure and clean heart, we ask for virtuous and pleasing manners, and to give us life as Muslims and to take our life while being upon the Sharee'ah of our Prophet, Muhammad (sall-Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

O Allaah, let us die as Muslims and make us meet the Saaliheen (righteous) without being disgraced or tried. Forgive us, our parents, and the believers on the Day of Judgement. We ask Allaah for inspiration to the correctness of sayings and actions. Indeed He is all powerful over all things and the most worthy of answering calls, and our final du'aa is, all praise belongs to Allaah, Lord of all the worlds.

³⁸ Aboo 'Uthmaan bin 'Abdur-Rahmaan as-Saaboonee, Imaam, Muhaddith, Shaykh-ul-Islam. He died in the year 449 hijree..

³⁹ Muwaffiq-ud-Deen Aboo Muhammad 'Abdullaah bin Ahmad ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdasee al-Hanbalee. Shaykh-ul-Islam, a major faqeeh, he died in the year 720 hijree.